

NSC BRIEFING

1 July 1958

CYPRUS

- I. Recent events have aroused deep-seated Greek-Turkish antagonisms, but tempers now appear to be cooling.
 - A. Danger of armed clash on mainland appears to have subsided with diplomatic maneuvering taking focus.
- II. Gradually increasing flexibility by all parties should accelerate diplomatic efforts to restrain violence and find interim solution.
 - A. Macmillan has invited Greek and Turkish premiers to discuss plan with him, either separately or together, but London insists that the basic principles of its plan must hold that it will eventually push ahead with plan, regardless of opposition.
 1. For present London prefers to let problem "simmer" rather than attempt further pressure on Athens and Ankara.
 - B. Athens appears willing to embark on serious negotiations for settlement which permanently excludes both ENOSIS and partition.
 1. Athens is flexible and ready to stand up to Makarios.
 - C. But political stability and pro-NATO orientation of Greece still in serious jeopardy if negotiations break down.
 - D. Ankara still demands partition but may be swinging around toward acceptance of compromise.

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1. Turks favor tripartite conference of Britain, Greece, and Turkey, but Menderes has offered to discuss Cyprus issue bilaterally with Macmillan.
 2. Pro-partition demonstrations throughout Turkey are continuing, accompanied by firm security precautions.
- E. On Cyprus, EOKA, the Greek underground organization, is pressing for bilateral talks between British and Makarios, who is ready to talk but still opposes the plan.
1. EOKA leader Grivas, alias Digenis, calls British plan "monstrosity" and threatens to strike "firmly and without mercy" if Governor Foot tries to implement the plan as it stands.
- III. Meanwhile there is an uneasy peace on the island, broken at intervals by isolated incidents.
- A. Cyprus still a powder-keg, but both sides see advantage of keeping peace for the present.
 - B. Foot has imposed a new law to prevent incitement to violence.
 - C. British have over 30,000 troops on island. Confident they can control situation.
- IV. Prospects for immediate future are for period of relative calm and marking time while the results of the current diplomatic phase become clarified.
- A. Despite great emotional tension between the two communities on Cyprus, there will probably be no serious outbreak unless UK moves unilaterally to implement its plan before the conclusion of further high level discussions.